# THE NEW SUNDAY EXPRESS

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Antim Panghal during the trials | PARVEEN NEGI

**Delhi HC not to interfere in exemption to wrestlers**

The Delhi High Court on Saturday refused to interfere with the exemption granted to top wrestlers Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia from the Asian Games trials and dismissed a petition filed by two grapplers against their direct entry into the Indian squad. Under-20 world champion Antim Panghal and Under-23 Asian champion Sujeet Kalkal had challenged the special treatment to Phogat and Punia. P11

DISSENT IN CONG

## 'Sidelined' Hariprasad makes a veiled attack on CM

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

SENIOR Congress leader BK Hariprasad, who was a strong contender for a ministerial berth, on Saturday expressed his displeasure at Chief Minister Siddaramaiah by indirectly stating that he knows how to make a leader CM and also to dislodge him from that position.

Hariprasad was speaking at a conference of the Ediga community to which he belongs, in the city. "I played a big role in deciding who should be the chief ministers of states ruled by Congress. I am well-versed in resolving leadership issues," he said.

The senior leader's statement indicates that factionalism prevails in Congress though it returned to power in the state with absolute majority. Hariprasad is close to Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar.

Hariprasad seems to be playing the caste card now as he feels sidelined by the party leadership, according to a source.

Quick to react, state BJP general secretary CN Ashwath Narayan said that Hariprasad's statement will be a turning point in state politics. "There is truth in it as it has come from a senior leader who has been in national politics for long," he added. CONTINUED ON: P5

A protest near the 'Wall of Remembrance' in Churachandpur | PTI

# Meitei exodus from Mizoram

People flee after ex-militant outfit advises them to leave state for their safety; sixth suspect in viral video arrested in Manipur

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @Guwahati

ON a day the sixth suspect in the Manipur viral video case was arrested, an exodus of Meiteis living in neighbouring Mizoram began on Saturday.

A routine flight of Alliance Air on Saturday arrived in Imphal from Aizawl, carrying 66 passengers — 56 of them Meiteis, official sources said. They were mostly teachers of different institutes, including Mizoram University, and students of paramedical, veterinary and nursing colleges. The exodus began after an organisation of former militants — Peace Accord MNF Returnees' Association (PAMRA) — in Mizoram asked the Meiteis of Manipur on Friday to leave the state for their "own safety". In Manipur, the Kuki Students' Organisation (KSO) alleged two young Kuki women were murdered on May 4, the day two other tribal women were disrobed, paraded and allegedly gang-raped by a mob.

**GOVT BEGINS DAMAGE LIMITATION EXERCISE**

The Mizoram government assured Manipuris of their safety and security and requested them to inform fellow Meiteis, both government employees and students, not to leave the state. They said a press release by the Peace Accord MNF Returnees' Association was misconstrued

The police arrested the sixth suspect from Thoubal district. Five suspects, including a juvenile, were arrested earlier. Four of them were sent to 11-day police remand on Friday. "The State Police is making all-out effort to arrest the remaining culprits," Manipur police said.

The KSO claimed there were many more videos similar to what went viral on July 19 and could come out anytime soon. Talking about another incident of May 4, it alleged, "two Kuki girls...from the Kangpokpi district were molested, raped and later, killed at their workplace at Konung Mamang, Imphal."

As for the exodus from Mizoram, apart from the flight, many other Meiteis took the road route to Assam's Barak Valley. Mizoram has over 2,000 Meiteis — half of them from Manipur and the rest from Assam. Many of them work in different sectors, including Central government offices. It was learnt some 300 Meiteis from different parts of Mizoram have gathered in Aizawl. They will leave on Sunday.

## AI IMAGES OF HAMPI'S PAST NOW A BIG HIT

AMIT S UPADHYE @ Hubballi

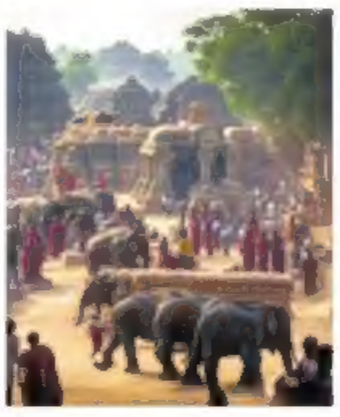
AI images depicting the glorious past of Hampi and the Vijayanagara Kingdom have become an instant hit among heritage buffs. The images were widely shared by officials from the Union Ministry of Culture a few days before the G20 meet was held in Hampi.

Since then, the images have been receiving overwhelming response from heritage buffs and netizens. They depict the erstwhile Hampi market with people moving around and making purchases. Horses, elephants and other animals are also seen in the market. In one of the images, a member of the royal family is seen showcasing jewellery.

"The images are attractive and give a glimpse of the grandeur of the erstwhile Vijayanagara Kingdom, where even jewels were sold in the market," said Nagaraj K, a senior tourist guide at Hampi.

Nagaraj, who was among the guides selected to assist G20 delegates, said Hampi is the most photographed tourist site in Karnataka. A large number of tourists can be seen photographing monuments, temples and other heritage sites at Hampi on a daily basis. Now, pre-wedding shoots are becoming popular at Hampi. Permission from local authorities is needed for photo or film shoots. However, there are no restrictions on cell phone photography at Hampi, he said.

Shivashankar Banagar, a well-known photographer from Hampi, said AI images are attractive. But they do not do justice to the architectural splendour of Hampi. The images resemble the temples located in north India. However, they should have a local flavour, he added.



EXPRESS READ

**CM wants Sonia Gandhi to become RS member from Karnataka?**

Bengaluru: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is said to have appealed to former AICC president Sonia Gandhi to become a Rajya Sabha member from Karnataka. On April 2, 2024, the terms of three Congress RS members from Karnataka will end, and Congress can retain all the three seats. P4

**KCR-led BRS to extend support to AAP on National Capital Bill**

New Delhi: The K Chandrashekar Rao-led Bharat Rashtra Samithi on Saturday said it will oppose the National Capital Territory Amendment Bill if it comes up for voting in Parliament. BRS Lok Sabha member G Ranjit Reddy said the party will extend support to AAP in opposing the Bill in both Houses. P5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